Raise in outfit allowance of employees posted in Indian Embassies

1648. SHRI MISA R. GANESAN:
SHRI K. K. VEERAPPAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that employees on being posted in Indian Embassies abroad are entitled to an outat allowance for himself and his family @ Rs. 2000.45000;

(b) whether this and other allowances in general and those relating to Moscow in particular have been/ ate being reviewed; and

(c) if so, the details of the steps taken?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) India-based employees on being posted to Indian missions Of posts abroad are entitled to an outfit allowance ranging from Rs. 2300 to Rs. 6300 for self and family depending upon the grade of the officer.

(b) and (c) The rates of outfit allowance are uniform for all missions and posts abroad. There is no proposal to review these rates now.

Other allowances relating to stations abroad are reviewed from time to time, in consultation with the mission concerned depending upon changes in local conditions including cost of living and other relevant factors. A proposal to pay India-based employees in Moscow fully in hard currency is presently being processed.

Difficulties being faced by Commonwealth of Independent States

1649. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of EXTER:-NAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to news item in Indian Express dated I7th February, 1992 Captioned "Foreign students face hard times in Commonwealth of Independent States" [1] and state:

(a) what steps are being taken by Government to tackle the problem;

(b) the steps being taken to streng. ; then ties between India and Common wealth of Independent States in the educational field;

(c) whether the subject of educational ties with Commonwealth of Independent States has figured on the agenda of items in top level meetings recently; and

(d) the details of steps proposed to foster long existing links with Commonwealth of Independent States?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Several steps have been taken including (i) release of US $50 p.m. per student already studying in the 'former USSR against deposit of equivalent rupees in India, (ii) issue of pre-paid ticket advice on Air India against payment in Indian rupees for students wishing to travel to India; (iii) arranging repatriation wherever necessary, as per Government regulations; and (iv) facilitating transit arrangements in Moscow for students in need and affected by civil disturbances as, for example, in Georgia.

(b) Government's willingness to enter into discussions leading to long term cooperation in the educational field has been conveyed *to* the Repub lics of the Commonwealth of Inde pendent States.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Discussions with individual member-States have been initiated or are underway. It is understood that at their meeting on 8 February, 92 the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Independent States decided to re-affirm corresponding agreements of the former, USSR with regard to foreign students and began wording out new documents.